

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. A casino gambling system in which a credit item may be utilized as a medium of value, the casino gambling system comprising:

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a server computer;

a first clerk validation terminal operatively coupled to said server computer, said first clerk validation terminal comprising:

a credit-input device that is capable of accepting a credit item representing a medium of value from a customer;

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a value dispenser that is capable of dispensing an item representing a medium of value; and

a validation controller operatively coupled to said credit-input device and said value dispenser, said validation controller comprising a microprocessor and a memory, said validation controller being programmed to determine whether a credit item accepted by said credit-input device is valid, said validation controller being programmed to cause said value dispenser to dispense a medium of value to the customer if said validation controller determines that said credit item is valid;

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a second clerk validation terminal operatively coupled to said server computer, said second clerk validation terminal comprising:

a credit-input device that is capable of accepting a credit item representing a medium of value from a customer;

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a value dispenser that is capable of dispensing an item representing a medium of value; and

a validation controller operatively coupled to said credit-input device of said second clerk validation terminal and said value dispenser of said second clerk validation terminal, said validation controller of said second clerk validation terminal comprising a microprocessor and a memory, said validation controller of said second clerk validation terminal being programmed to determine whether a credit item accepted

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by said credit-input device of said second clerk validation terminal is valid, said validation controller of said second clerk validation terminal being programmed to cause said value dispenser of said second clerk validation terminal to dispense a medium of value to the customer if said validation controller of said second clerk validation terminal determines that said credit item is valid;

a plurality of first casino gambling units operatively coupled to said first clerk validation terminal;

a plurality of second casino gambling units operatively coupled to said second clerk validation terminal,

one of said casino gambling units comprising:

a display unit that is capable of generating color images;

an input device that allows a player to make an input selection;

a value-input device that is capable of allowing the player to deposit a medium of value; and

a gambling unit controller operatively coupled to said display unit, said input device, and said value-input device, said gambling unit controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to said processor,

said gambling unit controller being programmed to allow the player to make a wager;

said gambling unit controller being programmed to cause a video image to be generated on said display unit, said video image representing a video gambling game selected from the group of video gambling games consisting of video poker, video blackjack, video slots, video keno and video bingo,

said video image comprising an image of at least five playing cards if said video gambling game is video poker,

said video image comprising an image of a plurality of simulated slot machine reels if said video gambling game is video slots,

said video image comprising an image of a plurality of playing cards if said video gambling game is video blackjack,

said video image comprising an image of a plurality of keno numbers if said video gambling game is video keno,

said video image comprising an image of a bingo grid if said video gambling game is video bingo, and

said gambling unit controller being programmed to determine, after said video image has been displayed, an outcome of said video gambling game represented by said video image and to determine a value payout associated with said outcome of said video gambling game; and

a cashier computer operatively coupled to said server computer, said cashier computer comprising:

a cashier credit-input device that is capable of accepting a credit item representing a medium of value;

a cashier dispenser that is capable of dispensing an item representing a medium of value;

a biometric input apparatus capable of generating digital data representing a unique physical characteristic of a cashier;

a cashier controller operatively coupled to said cashier credit-input device, said cashier dispenser, and said biometric input apparatus, said cashier controller comprising a microprocessor and a memory,

said cashier controller being programmed to control access to said cashier computer based upon digital data generated by said biometric input apparatus; and

said cashier controller being programmed to determine whether a credit item accepted by said cashier credit-input device is valid.

2. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 1 wherein said cashier credit-input device comprises a ticket reader that is capable of reading a ticket voucher.

3. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 1 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises a fingerprint scanner.

4. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 1 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises an eye scanner.

5. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 1 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises a camera.

6. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 1 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises a microphone.

7. A casino gambling system in which a credit item may be utilized as a medium of value, said casino gambling system comprising:

a server computer;

a plurality of casino gambling units operatively coupled to said server computer, one of said casino gambling units comprising:

a display unit that is capable of generating color images;

an input device that allows a player to make an input selection;

a value-input device that is capable of allowing the player to deposit a medium of value; and

a gambling unit controller operatively coupled to said display unit, said input device, and said value-input device, said gambling unit controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to said processor,

said gambling unit controller being programmed to allow the player to make a wager;

said gambling unit controller being programmed to cause a video image to be generated on said display unit, said video image representing a video gambling game selected from the

group of video gambling games consisting of video poker, video blackjack, video slots, video keno and video bingo,

said video image comprising an image of at least five playing cards if said video gambling game is video poker,

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said video image comprising an image of a plurality of simulated slot machine reels if said video gambling game is video slots,

said video image comprising an image of a plurality of playing cards if said video gambling game is video blackjack,

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said video image comprising an image of a plurality of keno numbers if said video gambling game is video keno,

said video image comprising an image of a bingo grid if said video gambling game is video bingo, and

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said gambling unit controller being programmed to determine, after said video image has been displayed, an outcome of said video gambling game represented by said video image and to determine a value payout associated with said outcome of said video gambling game; and

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a cashier computer operatively coupled to said server computer, said cashier computer comprising:

a cashier credit-input device that is capable of accepting a credit item representing a medium of value;

a cashier dispenser that is capable of dispensing an item representing a medium of value;

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a biometric input apparatus capable of generating digital data representing a unique physical characteristic of a cashier, said biometric input apparatus being selected from the group of biometric input apparatuses consisting of a fingerprint scanner, an eye scanner, a camera, and a microphone/ voice digitizer apparatus;

a cashier controller operatively coupled to said cashier credit-input device, said cashier dispenser, and said biometric input apparatus, said cashier controller comprising a microprocessor and a memory,

said cashier controller being programmed to control access to said cashier computer based upon digital data generated by said biometric input apparatus;

said cashier controller being programmed to store digital data representing a fingerprint if said biometric input apparatus comprises a fingerprint scanner;

said cashier controller being programmed to store digital data representing a portion of a person's eye if said biometric input apparatus comprises an eye scanner;

said cashier controller being programmed to store digital data representing a portion of a person's face if said biometric input apparatus comprises a camera;

said cashier controller being programmed to store digital data representing a person's voice if said biometric input apparatus comprises a microphone; and

said cashier controller being programmed to determine whether a credit item accepted by said cashier credit-input device is valid.

8. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 7 wherein said cashier credit-input device comprises a ticket reader that is capable of reading a ticket voucher.

9. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 7 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises a fingerprint scanner.

10. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 7 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises an eye scanner.

11. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 7 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises a camera.

12. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 7 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises a microphone coupled to a voice digitizer.

13. A casino gambling system, comprising:  
a first computer;  
a plurality of casino gambling units operatively coupled to said first computer, one of said casino gambling units comprising:

a display unit that is capable of generating color images;  
an input device that allows a player to make an input selection;  
a value-input device that is capable of allowing the player to deposit a medium of value; and

a gambling unit controller operatively coupled to said display unit, said input device, and said value-input device, said gambling unit controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to said processor,

said gambling unit controller being programmed to allow the player to make a wager;

said gambling unit controller being programmed to cause a video image relating to a video gambling game to be generated on said display unit;

said gambling unit controller being programmed to determine, after said image has been displayed, an outcome of said video gambling game and a value payout associated with said outcome of said video gambling game; and

a second computer operatively coupled to said first computer, said second computer comprising:

a biometric input apparatus capable of generating digital data representing a unique physical characteristic of a user;

a controller operatively coupled to said biometric input apparatus, said controller of said second computer comprising a microprocessor and a memory, said controller of said second computer being programmed to control access to said second computer based upon digital data generated by said biometric input apparatus.

14. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 13 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises a fingerprint scanner.

15. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 13 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises an eye scanner.

16. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 13 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises a camera.

17. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 13 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises a microphone coupled to a voice digitizer.

18. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 13,  
wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed to store a plurality of sets of digital data, each of said sets of digital data being derived from said biometric input apparatus and each of said sets of digital data corresponding to a unique physical characteristic of a person, and

wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed to generate a set of composite digital data based on said plurality of sets of digital data.

19. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 13,  
wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed to store a plurality of sets of digital data, each of said sets of digital data being derived from said biometric input apparatus and each of said sets of digital data corresponding to a unique physical characteristic of a person,



wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed to generate a set of composite digital data based on said plurality of sets of digital data, and

wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed to compare a set of digital data representing a unique physical characteristic of a person attempting to use said second computer with said set of composite digital data to determine whether the person attempting to use said second computer should be allowed to use said second computer.

20. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 13 wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed with an employee enrollment routine that allows said controller of said second computer to store digital data representing a unique physical characteristic of an employee.

21. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 13, wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed with an employee enrollment routine that allows said controller of said second computer to store digital data representing a unique physical characteristic of an employee, and wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed with an access-control routine that allows said controller of said second computer to limit use of said second computer to an employee for which digital data representing a unique physical characteristic of the employee has been previously stored by said enrollment routine.

22. A casino gambling system, comprising:  
a first computer;  
a plurality of casino gambling units operatively coupled to said first computer, one of said casino gambling units comprising:  
a display unit that is capable of generating color images;  
an input device that allows a player to make an input selection;  
a value-input device that is capable of allowing the player to deposit a medium of value; and

a gambling unit controller operatively coupled to said display unit, said input device, and said value-input device, said gambling unit controller comprising a processor and a memory operatively coupled to said processor,

5                   said gambling unit controller being programmed to allow the player to make a wager;

                  said gambling unit controller being programmed to cause a video image to be generated on said display unit, said video image representing a video gambling game selected from the group of video gambling games consisting of video poker, video  
10                   blackjack, video slots, video keno and video bingo,

                  said video image comprising an image of at least five playing cards if said video gambling game is video poker,

15                   said video image comprising an image of a plurality of simulated slot machine reels if said video gambling game is video slots,

                  said video image comprising an image of a plurality of playing cards if said video gambling game is video blackjack,

20                   said video image comprising an image of a plurality of keno numbers if said video gambling game is video keno,

                  said video image comprising an image of a bingo grid if said video gambling game is video bingo, and

25                   said gambling unit controller being programmed to determine, after said image has been displayed, an outcome of said video gambling game and a value payout associated with said outcome of said video gambling game; and

                  a second computer operatively coupled to said first computer, said second computer comprising:

30                   a biometric input apparatus capable of generating digital data representing a unique physical characteristic of a user;

a controller operatively coupled to said biometric input apparatus, said controller of said second computer comprising a microprocessor and a memory, said controller of said second computer being programmed to control access to said second computer based upon digital data generated by said biometric input apparatus.

23. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 22 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises a fingerprint scanner.

24. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 22 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises an eye scanner.

25. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 22 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises a camera.

26. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 22 wherein said biometric input apparatus comprises a microphone coupled to a digitizer.

27. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 22,  
wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed to store a plurality of sets of digital data, each of said sets of digital data being derived from said biometric input apparatus and each of said sets of digital data corresponding to a unique physical characteristic of a person, and

wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed to generate a set of composite digital data based on said plurality of sets of digital data.

28. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 22,  
wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed to store a plurality of sets of digital data, each of said sets of digital data being derived from said biometric input apparatus and each of said sets of digital data corresponding to a unique physical characteristic of a person,

wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed to generate a set of composite digital data based on said plurality of sets of digital data, and

wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed to compare a set of digital data representing a unique physical characteristic of a person attempting to use said second computer with said set of composite digital data to determine whether the person attempting to use said second computer should be allowed to use said second computer.

29. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 22 wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed with an employee enrollment routine that allows said controller of said second computer to store digital data representing a unique physical characteristic of an employee.

30. A casino gambling system as defined in claim 22, wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed with an employee enrollment routine that allows said controller of said second computer to store digital data representing a unique physical characteristic of an employee, and

wherein said controller of said second computer is programmed with an access-control routine that allows said controller of said second computer to limit use of said second computer to an employee for which digital data representing a unique physical characteristic of the employee has been previously stored by said enrollment routine.

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